

# THE VRC CONNECTION

## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

November 2010

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 3

### AKC CAR donates \$32,800 worth of supplies for CAMETs

by Jen Nixon

This fall, AKC Companion Animal Recovery donated 2,000 microchips and 40 scanners that will be used to help companion animals during an animal disaster. The microchips were donated to the N.C. State Animal Response Team and will be used in Companion Animal Mobile Equipment Trailers that are placed throughout the state. The donation has a cash value of \$32,800. In an emergency shelter, the donated scanners will help staff identify animals that already have microchips, and the rest of the animals can be micro-chipped to help tell them apart and keep records straight.



Scott Sharp of AKC CAR; Chester Lowder, representing NCSART; and Sharron Stewart, representing the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

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NCVRC training will be available again this year at NCVRC. The public practice track is Friday, Nov. 5. Please join us if you are attending the conference!

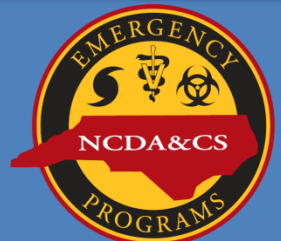


#### NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & CONSUMER SERVICES

##### Emergency Programs Division

*Steve Troxler, Commissioner*

*Sharron Stewart, Director*



# County CART Exercises: Halifax County

by Dr. Jimmy Tickel

As a continuing effort to inform VRC members of various preparedness efforts across the state, this article covers the actions taken by Halifax County to address sheltering needs that might occur during natural disasters.

Halifax County EM director, Tina Hinton, has taken an active role in planning and preparing for disasters in her county. Halifax faces the same dilemma many NC counties encounter - limited resources and time pitted against planning for the unknown; specifically, how much sheltering capacity should be planned for? Evacuation sheltering capacity needs to provide not only sheltering for residents, but also evacuees from coastal counties that would head west from a coastal storm, as well as potential travelers on I-95.

With limited personnel resources available, Halifax has opted to utilize "in-county sheltering resources" first, such as boarding kennels, veterinary clinics and pet friendly hotels for evacuation sheltering needs. Most of these sheltering resources are located in Halifax's largest community, Roanoke Rapids, located in the far northwestern portion of the county. To establish sheltering resource capacity, Hinton contacted all the in-county resources, discussed how they played a role in country animal sheltering response, and determined their capacity, documenting this in the response plan. Local veterinarians will provide veterinary care and sheltering resources. Reimbursement details through the PETs Act are still being worked out, but the advantage of using in-county resources listed above is that they require no additional training or new facility set up.

There are no co-located shelters planned, but there is a vacant shelter facility that the county owns and has planned to use as a backup once all in-county resources are used. One challenge that the county faces is that many roads serving smaller rural communities are apt to be affected by flooding if large amounts of rainfall occur, resulting in some isolation issues. Animal Control will play an important role in transportation of animals to the backup shelter if it is utilized. Staff training for the backup shelter is currently being planned, as well as acquisition of a CAMET to support sheltering operations.

Historically, there have not been large amounts of animals needing shelter, but Hinton and her fellow CART members (Extension, animal control and volunteers) are continuing to plan and prepare for animal response needs. They are well aware that the public may seek shelter for their animals in larger numbers than seen in the past.



## VRC COORDINATOR

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## COMPLETE YOUR VRC REGISTRATION AT

[www.servnc.org](http://www.servnc.org)

## REQUIREMENTS FOR VRC DEPLOYMENT

- ICS 100, 200 and 700
- Biosecurity/PPE Training
- Knowledge of NC Emergency Management
- Knowledge of Emergency Support Functions
- Attendance at VRC Meetings
- Sign a Code of Conduct



Dr. Jimmy Tickel talking to the Halifax County CART

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- North Carolina Veterinary Conference – November 6 – 8, 2010
- 2010 One Medicine Symposium – December 8, 2010

# County CART Exercises: Moore County

by Dr. Bruce Akers

On Sept. 20, Moore County hosted a table top exercise at the Emergency Operation Center (EOC). This exercise was scheduled by the county, but planned and conducted by UNC Pembroke's Department of Public Administration. EM director Scot Brooks and the County Animal Response Team (CART) has been working toward this exercise for more than a year as they firmed up partnerships with state and local agencies, and fine-tuned the animal annex to the county's Emergency Operations Plan. This partnership included EM, animal control, American Red Cross, local veterinarians, representatives of the county's pet responsibility committee, other animal rescue groups and the regional emergency programs veterinarian. In fact, Brooks and the CART members had come together more than two years ago and the plan was only one of the initiatives started. After completing and gaining approval of the county's companion animal co-location sheltering plan, they hosted a preparedness and educational seminar last year at Sandhills Community College to get the word out, educate residents and solicit volunteers to support further plans; all successes. Lately the county's veterinarians have been meeting and working on plans to be able to provide support to the shelters and to maintain veterinary services to county residents during a disaster at off-site pre-designated centers for small and large animals.

During the exercise, EM monitored the simulated situation at the EOC and utilized the Incident Command System (ICS). The drill was based on a fire scenario and coordination between partners was necessary for additional support. Moore County is heavily populated with horse farms, and the simulation area was estimated to contain 300 or more horses, plus dozens of companion animals that also needed to be evacuated. Calls and decisions were made to dispatch a CART advisor to the Incident Commander (IC) to make recommendations related to the animals, their movements and in many cases their decontamination of jet fuel.

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## ABOUT VRC

**OUR MISSION** To train and prepare professionals in the animal care community to respond to disaster events (all hazards) that affect both production and companion animals. Our members will serve as a resource for our state and the nation.

# VRC SPOTLIGHT:



by Diane Ferello

*Diane is pictured here with Mr. Dennis Durham, Farm Bureau representative for Johnston County*

I am Diane Ferello, originally from Long Island, NY, and moved to North Carolina in 1992. I became employed at NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine in October 1992. I started in LAR (Lab Animal Resources) and transferred into TAU (Teaching Animal Unit) as the Equine Manager in December 1994. After 12 years in that position, I took the position as the Facilities Manager of TAU, which also gave me the responsibility of managing the Beef unit. The Teaching Animal Unit consists of 6 units - Dairy, Equine, Beef, Swine, Small Ruminants (sheep and goats) and Poultry (turkeys in the fall and chickens in the spring). The TAU is designed to educate the veterinary students about different hands-on techniques used for these species of large animals.

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*To see recent news and updates, please visit the VRC website at [www.ncvrc.org](http://www.ncvrc.org). If you have questions about the VRC or would like to offer suggestions or articles for future newsletters, contact Mandy at [mandy.tolson@ncagr.gov](mailto:mandy.tolson@ncagr.gov).*



# North Carolina's Unwanted Horse: Reality or Myth?

by Mike Yoder, PhD, PAS



On Sept. 24, representatives of the North Carolina horse industry met to discuss the issue of the unwanted horse. The symposium was designed to better understand the severity of the unwanted horse issue in North Carolina and to identify policy and procedural action items to address the issue. Dr. Tom Ray spoke on behalf of the State Veterinarian's Office, while Dr. Jim Hamilton presented the perspective of the private veterinarian. A panel discussion, led by Julie Walls discussed the issue from the standpoint of equine rescue organizations, while a panel of animal control officers led by Ernie Wilkinson addressed unwanted horse issues faced by county animal control agencies. The number of equine auctions in North Carolina has declined.

Dr. Robert Coleman, Professor of Equine Sciences at the University of Kentucky, and a speaker representing the American Horse Council concerning the unwanted horse, addressed attendees during the lunch break. Dr. Coleman noted that the number of unwanted horses is truly a concern with approximately 198,000 horses either sent to slaughter, considered unadoptable or otherwise caught up in the Bureau of Land Management Wild Horse and Burro Program in 2007-2008. Dr. Coleman further stated that 52 percent of the BLM annual budget is used to care for horses that have been removed from federal lands, leaving less and less for other aspects of the program. According to Dr. Coleman, there are four keys to solving the unwanted horse issue and all four will need to be utilized to adequately address the issue:

- Horse owner education needs to be expanded.
- Must increase the ability of rescue/retirement organizations.
- Must re-open equine slaughter plants.
- Must increase euthanasia and disposal options for horse owners.



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## Moore County CART Exercises (continued from page 3)

With assistance from the CART adviser, county EM had to expand and develop separate support operations to manage what was now a myriad of new tasks separate from the fire control. The CART membership had to work out coordination for, and development of, a staging area for livestock trailers and volunteers to marshal to without hampering further fire fighting resources arriving into the area. The incident was looking at three to four simultaneous operations: fire management, sheltering, evacuation of humans and animals, and decontamination, triage and treatment. The tasks, necessary coordination and decisions to be made were quickly identified and added to the improvements of the county's plan. Later in the evening, the simulated fire was

contained; support operations continued to function for what would likely be days post-fire. This three-hour table top exercise was attended by more than 30 representatives from local and state agencies. It was a thorough work out for the county's plan and agencies involved. It allowed all to identify any shortcomings, and highlighted additions that would be added to improve decision triggers for use and activation of the CART members/sections and other logistics that would be necessary. All in all, exercise participants were so deeply engaged in the scenario that many of the controllers' injects were not needed to continue the flow. Overall, the exercise was a success and the county is anxiously awaiting the After Action Report and Improvement Plan recommendations.

# North Carolina's Unwanted Horse: Reality or Myth?

(continued from page 4)

Throughout the day a number of facts were introduced that shed light on the problem of the unwanted horse in North Carolina. The following points begin to define the severity of the problem:

The number of horse sales in North Carolina has declined substantially.

The remaining sales, the number of no-sales has increased.

For horses in the southeast the slaughter market is non-existent

Dr. Hamilton reported that in the past two years his clinic has euthanized more horses than they did in the previous ten years.

Veterinarians are finding that many clients are less communicative than in the past, with many of their euthanasia decisions based on economics.

Animal control is handling twice the number of horses they did just two years ago. As a result, some counties are having to build larger facilities to address the issue.

Horse owners, animal control officers, and equine rescue organizations all would benefit from additional educational programming.

Equine rescue organizations are operating at full capacity and are running out of adoption options.

These points strongly support the hypothesis that North Carolina does have a rather serious problem with unwanted horses. In recognition of this, symposium participants participated in focus groups, brainstorming possible solutions to the issue. Many stated that horse owners, animal control agents, and equine rescue personnel were all in need of education and that development of educational programming should be a priority. It was also suggested that the education of magistrates and attorneys should be a priority. Other action points included the introduction of castration clinics to encourage responsible ownership and identification of alternative methods of euthanasia and disposal that are more cost effective for horse owners. Participants agreed that the networking accomplished through the symposium was critical and that collaboration between animal control agencies, equine rescue organizations, and veterinarians was a crucial first step to controlling the problem of the unwanted horse.

Thank you to our sponsors: North Carolina Farm Bureau, Southern States Cooperative, and the North Carolina Horse Council



## VRC MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (continued from page 3)

I was deployed to Hattiesburg, Mississippi during Katrina under NCSART. This deployment was the beginning of my interest in emergency response. My first ICS crash course was in the van driving to Hattiesburg! I have since completed ICS up to 400, as well as NIMS 700 and 800. I encourage individuals that are interested in livestock emergency management to take IS10 and 11 as well as 111, all offered online under FEMA. The most important lesson I brought home after that deployment was the importance of working together with different types of people and organizations. Checking your ego at the door! Your job could entail being the liaison between two organizations to sweeping the bathroom floors! I became a member of NCVRC in 2006. This organization introduced me to many contacts from different counties throughout NC. Having trainings are important but listening to others experiences during emergencies are just as educational.

Eighth Annual

# "One Medicine" Symposium

**December 8, 2010**

Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center | Durham, North Carolina



## Reality Bites:

### A One Medicine Approach to Vector-borne Diseases

A conference for physicians, nurses, veterinarians, veterinary technicians, public health professionals, environmental health specialists, agriculture professionals, wildlife professionals, and federal, military, state and local disaster responders.

### Conference objectives:

- Describe the diagnosis, treatment, surveillance and vector control measures in humans and animals for vector-borne diseases.
- Discuss the similarities and differences of vector-borne disease ecology, diagnosis and case management between people and animals.
- Discuss the impact of our changing ecology on wildlife and disease risks for people and animals in the Southeastern United States.
- Emphasize the "One Medicine" approach of close cooperation between human and veterinary medicine for a rapid and effective response to emerging vector-borne diseases.

### For registration information and other details:

visit [www.onemedicinenc.org](http://www.onemedicinenc.org), call 919.515.2261 or complete and fax the registration form provided on page 4.

- Registration Fee is \$50.00



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November 2010